

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method for playing a card game, comprising:
2 dealing a starting hand to at least one player and to the dealer, wherein each
3 starting hand includes one or more cards representing a potential portion of a resulting
4 poker hand;
5 placing a bet by the player;
6 determining whether the dealer's starting hand meets qualifying criteria;
7 placing a bet by the dealer in response to the player's bet, and dealing a
8 community hand, if the dealer's starting hand meets the qualifying criteria;
9 determining a player poker rank for the player's resulting poker hand
10 derived from cards including the player's starting hand and the community hand;
11 determining a dealer poker rank for the dealer's resulting poker hand
12 derived from cards including the dealer's starting hand and the community hand; and
13 identifying a winning poker hand based on the player's resulting poker hand
14 and the dealer's resulting poker hand.
- 1 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein dealing a starting hand comprises dealing a
2 two-card starting hand to the player and to the dealer.
- 1 3. The method of Claim 2, wherein dealing a community hand comprises
2 dealing a five-card community hand.
- 1 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein:
2 determining a player poker rank for the player's resulting poker hand
3 comprises determining a player poker rank for a five-card player resulting poker hand
4 derived from the player's two-card starting hand and the five-card community hand; and
5 determining a dealer poker rank for the dealer's resulting poker hand
6 comprises determining a dealer poker rank for a five-card dealer resulting poker hand
7 derived from the dealer's two-card starting hand and the five-card community hand.

- 1 5. The method of Claim 4, wherein identifying a winning poker hand
2 comprises identifying a highest poker rank of the player poker rank and the dealer poker
3 rank.
- 1 6. The method of Claim 1, further comprising placing initial bets by the at
2 least one player and by the dealer prior to dealing the starting hands.
- 1 7. The method of Claim 6, wherein placing initial bets by the dealer comprises
2 calling the at least one player's initial bet.
- 1 8. The method of Claim 6, wherein placing initial bets by the dealer comprises
2 physically presenting the initial bet by the dealer.
- 1 9. The method of Claim 6, further comprising collecting the bets and the initial
2 bets by the dealer or the player identified as having the winning poker hand.
- 1 10. The method of Claim 6, further comprising foregoing placing the bet by the
2 player and consequently the opportunity to obtain a player's resulting poker hand, and
3 forfeiting the player's initial bet, at the player's election after receiving the player's starting
4 hand.
- 1 11. The method of Claim 6, further comprising foregoing placing the bet by the
2 dealer and consequently the opportunity to obtain a dealer's resulting poker hand, and
3 forfeiting the dealer's initial bet, if the dealer's starting hand does not meet the qualifying
4 criteria.
- 1 12. The method of Claim 1, wherein placing a bet by the player comprises
2 placing a fixed bet of a predetermined amount.
- 1 13. The method of Claim 1, wherein placing a bet by the player comprises
2 selecting, by the player, one of a plurality of fixed bets of corresponding predetermined
3 amounts.

1 14. The method of Claim 13, wherein determining whether the dealer's starting
2 hand meets qualifying criteria comprises determining whether the dealer's starting hand
3 meets one of a plurality of predetermined qualifying criteria alternatives corresponding to
4 the fixed bet selected by the player.

1 15. The method of Claim 13, wherein determining whether the dealer's starting
2 hand meets qualifying criteria comprises identifying one of a plurality of predetermined
3 qualifying criteria alternatives based on the fixed bet selected by the player.

1 16. The method of Claim 15, further comprising associating at least some of the
2 predetermined qualifying criteria alternatives with different predetermined amounts of the
3 fixed bets.

1 17. The method of Claim 16, wherein associating at least some of the
2 predetermined qualifying criteria alternatives with different predetermined amounts of the
3 fixed bets comprises associating higher poker ranks as the predetermined qualifying
4 criteria for the fixed bets having higher corresponding predetermined amounts relative to
5 the fixed bets having lower corresponding predetermined amounts.

1 18. The method of Claim 13, further comprising establishing different
2 qualifying criteria based on the fixed bet selected by the player.

1 19. The method of Claim 18, wherein the qualifying criteria comprises a
2 qualifying poker rank, and wherein establishing different qualifying criteria comprises
3 increasing the qualifying poker rank substantially commensurate with an increase in the
4 predetermined amounts of the fixed bets.

1 20. The method of Claim 18, wherein the qualifying criteria comprises a
2 qualifying poker rank, and wherein establishing different qualifying criteria comprises
3 increasing the qualifying poker rank relative to an increase in the predetermined amounts
4 of the fixed bets.

1 21. The method of Claim 18, wherein the qualifying criteria comprises a
2 qualifying poker rank, and wherein establishing different qualifying criteria comprises
3 associating a highest qualifying poker rank for a highest predetermined amount of the fixed
4 bets, and associating a lowest qualifying poker rank for a lowest predetermined amount of
5 the fixed bets.

1 22. The method of Claim 1, wherein placing a bet by the player comprises
2 selecting, by the player, a desired bet amount in a range of allowable bet amounts.

1 23. The method of Claim 1, wherein placing a bet by the player comprises
2 wagering, by the player, one of a plurality of wager amounts available to the player.

1 24. The method of Claim 23, wherein determining whether the dealer's starting
2 hand meets qualifying criteria comprises determining whether the dealer's starting hand
3 meets one of a plurality of predetermined qualifying criteria alternatives corresponding to
4 the wager amount wagered by the player.

1 25. The method of Claim 23, further comprising establishing different
2 qualifying criteria based on the wager amount wagered by the player.

1 26. The method of Claim 25, wherein the qualifying criteria comprises a
2 qualifying poker rank, and wherein establishing different qualifying criteria comprises
3 increasing the qualifying poker rank substantially commensurate with an increase in the
4 wager amount wagered by the player.

1 27. The method of Claim 25, wherein the qualifying criteria comprises a
2 qualifying poker rank, and wherein establishing different qualifying criteria comprises
3 increasing the qualifying poker rank relative to an increase in the wager amount wagered
4 by the player.

1 28. The method of Claim 25, wherein the qualifying criteria comprises a
2 qualifying poker rank, and wherein establishing different qualifying criteria comprises

3 associating a highest qualifying poker rank for a highest wager amount that can be wagered
4 by the player, and associating a lowest qualifying poker rank for a lowest wager amount
5 that can be wagered by the player.

1 29. The method of Claim 23, further comprising establishing a single
2 predetermined qualifying criteria applicable to all of the wager amounts wagered by the
3 player.

1 30. The method of Claim 1, wherein determining whether the dealer's starting
2 hand meets qualifying criteria comprises comparing the dealer's starting hand with the
3 qualifying criteria, and determining whether a poker rank of the dealer's starting hand is
4 greater than or equal to a qualifying poker rank.

1 31. The method of Claim 1, further comprising awarding the player with a
2 bonus if the player poker rank for the player's resulting poker hand is greater than or equal
3 to a predetermined poker rank.

1 32. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
2 establishing one or more predetermined poker ranks and corresponding
3 bonus payout amounts; and
4 awarding the player with the bonus payout amount corresponding to the
5 predetermined poker rank achieved by the player poker rank.

1 33. The method of Claim 1, wherein placing a bet by the dealer in response to
2 the player's bet comprises calling the player's bet by the dealer.

1 34. The method of Claim 1, wherein placing a bet by the dealer in response to
2 the player's bet comprises physically presenting the bet in response to the player's bet.

1 35. The method of Claim 1, wherein identifying a winning poker hand based on
2 the player's resulting poker hand and the dealer's resulting poker hand further comprises

3 identifying a tie between the player's and dealer's resulting poker hands, and settling bets
4 in accordance with a predetermined tie rule.

1 36. The method of Claim 1, wherein dealing a community hand comprises
2 dealing one or more partial community hands having fewer cards than a total community
3 hand, and further comprising:
4 placing subsequent bets by the player in response to one or more of the
5 partial community hands and the total community hand;
6 calling the subsequent bets by the dealer; and
7 collecting the bets, subsequent bets, and the initial bets by the dealer or the
8 player identified as having the winning poker hand.

1 37. A method for electronically providing a card game, comprising:
2 displaying a player starting hand and a dealer starting hand to the player,
3 wherein each starting hand includes one or more cards representing a potential portion of a
4 resulting poker hand;
5 placing a bet by the player;
6 determining whether the dealer starting hand meets qualifying criteria;
7 placing a bet by a virtual dealer in response to the player's bet, and
8 displaying a multi-card community hand, if the dealer starting hand meets the qualifying
9 criteria;
10 determining a player poker rank for the player's resulting poker hand
11 derived from cards including the player's starting hand and the multi-card community
12 hand;
13 determining a dealer poker rank for the virtual dealer's resulting poker hand
14 derived from cards including the dealer starting hand and the multi-card community hand;
15 and
16 identifying a winning poker hand based on the player's resulting poker hand
17 and the virtual dealer's resulting poker hand.

1 38. The method of Claim 37, further comprising placing an ante bet by both the
2 player and the virtual dealer.

1 39. The method of Claim 38, further comprising determining an aggregate total
2 of the bets and ante bets of the player and the virtual dealer, and awarding the aggregate
3 total to the player or the virtual dealer identified as having the winning poker hand.

1 40. The method of Claim 39, wherein awarding the aggregate total to the player
2 comprises adding the aggregate total to an accumulated credit total of the player.

1 41. The method of Claim 39, wherein awarding the aggregate total to the dealer
2 comprises forfeiting the bet and the ante bet placed by the player.

1 42. The method of Claim 37, further comprising providing the player with a
2 selectable choice for an amount of the bet placed by the player.

1 43. The method of Claim 42, further comprising establishing different
2 qualifying criteria based on the amount of the bet placed by the player.

1 44. The method of Claim 42, wherein providing the player with a selectable
2 choice for an amount of the bet placed by the player comprises providing a user interface
3 by which the player selects the amount of the bet placed.

1 45. The method of Claim 37, wherein displaying a player starting hand
2 comprises displaying, face up, a two-card starting hand.

1 46. A method for playing a card game, comprising:
2 placing first bets by a plurality of players;
3 dealing a starting hand to each of the plurality of players and to a dealer,
4 wherein each starting hand includes one or more cards representing a potential portion of a
5 resulting poker hand;
6 placing second bets by one or more of the players who choose to continue
7 participating in the card game;
8 determining whether the dealer's starting hand meets predetermined
9 qualifying criteria;

10 calling the players' bets by the dealer, and dealing a community hand, if the
11 dealer's starting hand meets the predetermined qualifying criteria;
12 for each player who placed the second bets, determining player poker ranks
13 for each player's resulting poker hand derived from cards including the community hand
14 and each respective player's starting hand;
15 determining a dealer poker rank for the dealer's resulting poker hand
16 derived from cards including the dealer's starting hand and the community hand; and
17 identifying a winning poker hand based on the players' resulting poker
18 hands and the dealer's resulting poker hand.

1 47. A method for playing a card game, comprising:
2 placing initial bets by at least one player and by a dealer;
3 dealing a two-card starting hand to the player and to the dealer, wherein
4 each two-card starting hand represents a potential portion of a resulting poker hand;
5 placing a second bet by the player, if the player opts to remain in the card
6 game based on the player's two-card starting hand;
7 determining whether the dealer's two-card starting hand meets
8 predetermined qualifying criteria;
9 if the dealer's two-card starting hand meets the predetermined qualifying
10 criteria, placing a second bet by the dealer in response to the player's second bet, and
11 dealing a multi-card community hand;
12 determining a player poker rank for the player's resulting poker hand
13 derived from the player's two-card starting hand and the multi-card community hand;
14 determining a dealer poker rank for the dealer's resulting poker hand
15 derived from the dealer's two-card starting hand and the multi-card community hand; and
16 identifying a winning poker hand between the player's resulting poker hand
17 and the dealer's resulting poker hand, wherein the winning poker hand is based on the
18 highest poker rank between the player poker rank and the dealer poker rank.

1 48. The method of Claim 47, wherein dealing a two-card starting hand to the
2 player and to the dealer comprises dealing the two-card starting hand face-down to at least
3 the player.

1 49. The method of Claim 47, further comprising collecting the bets and the
2 initial bets by the dealer or the player identified as having the winning poker hand.

1 50. The method of Claim 47, further comprising the player folding the player's
2 two-card starting hand and forfeiting the player's initial bet to the dealer.

1 51. The method of Claim 47, further comprising forfeiting the dealer's initial
2 bet if the dealer's two-card starting hand does not meet the predetermined qualifying
3 criteria.

1 52. A computer-implemented poker apparatus for allowing player participation
2 in a card game, the poker apparatus comprising:
3 a display device to display a player starting hand and a dealer starting hand
4 each including one or more cards representing a potential portion of a resulting poker hand;
5 a user interface to accept an ante bet by the player, and to accept a second
6 bet placed by the player if the player chooses to continue in the card game based on the
7 player starting hand; and
8 a processing system configured to determine whether the dealer starting
9 hand meets qualifying criteria, and if so, to call the player's second bet and cause the
10 display device to display a community hand, the processing system being further
11 configured to determine a player poker rank for the player's resulting poker hand derived
12 from the player starting hand and the community hand, to determine a dealer poker rank
13 for the virtual dealer's resulting poker hand derived from the dealer starting hand and the
14 community hand, and to identify a winning poker hand between the player's resulting
15 poker hand and the virtual dealer's resulting poker hand.

1 53. The computer-implemented poker apparatus as in Claim 52, further
2 comprising a casino gaming machine housing the display device, user interface, and
3 processing system.

1 54. The computer-implemented poker apparatus as in Claim 52, wherein the
2 user interface further comprises a user interface mechanism to allow the player to fold in
3 response to receiving the player starting hand, and wherein the processing system is further
4 configured to forfeit the player's ante bet in response to the player folding.

1 55. A method for playing a card game, comprising:
2 dealing a starting hand to at least one player and to the dealer, wherein each
3 starting hand includes one or more cards representing a potential portion of a resulting
4 poker hand;
5 placing a bet by the player for each concurrent hand desired for
6 participation;
7 determining whether the dealer's starting hand meets qualifying criteria;
8 if the dealer's starting hand meets the qualifying criteria, placing a bet by
9 the dealer in response to each of the player's bets, and dealing a separate community hand
10 for each of the concurrent hands in which the player is participating;
11 determining player poker ranks for each player resulting poker hand derived
12 from cards including the player's starting hand and each of the community hands;
13 determining dealer poker ranks for the dealer resulting poker hand derived
14 from cards including the dealer's starting hand and each of the community hands; and
15 identifying a plurality of winning poker hands based on the player resulting
16 poker hands and corresponding dealer resulting poker hands.

1 56. A method for playing a card game, comprising:
2 placing a plurality of initial bets by a player to participate in a plurality of
3 hands;
4 matching each of the plurality of initial bets by the dealer;

5 dealing a player starting hand to the player, wherein the player starting hand
6 includes one or more cards representing a potential portion of a player resulting poker
7 hand;
8 dealing a plurality of dealer starting hands to the dealer, one for each of the
9 plurality of initial bets placed by the player, wherein each of the dealer starting hands
10 include one or more cards representing a potential portion of a respective number of dealer
11 resulting poker hands;
12 placing a second bet by the player for each of the plurality of hands in
13 which the player has not folded;
14 for each of the plurality of hands in which the player has not folded,
15 determining whether the dealer starting hands meet predetermined qualifying criteria;
16 if the dealer starting hands meet the predetermined qualifying criteria,
17 calling the player's second bets by the dealer, and dealing a multi-card community hand;
18 determining a player poker rank for the player resulting poker hand derived
19 from the player's starting hand and the multi-card community hand;
20 determining dealer poker ranks for each of the dealer resulting poker hands
21 derived from the dealer starting hands and the multi-card community hand; and
22 identifying winning poker hands between the player resulting poker hand
23 and the dealer resulting poker hands, wherein the winning poker hands are based on the
24 highest poker rank between the player poker rank and the dealer poker ranks.